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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/762,559	01/23/2004	Katsunori Takada	K06-165935M/TBS	3219
21254	7590	06/30/2005	EXAMINER	
MCGINN & GIBB, PLLC 8321 OLD COURTHOUSE ROAD SUITE 200 VIENNA, VA 22182-3817			YEE, DEBORAH	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1742	

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/762,559	Applicant(s) KATSUNORI TAKADA ET AL	
	Examiner Deborah Yee	Art Unit 1742	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9-15-04, 6-17-04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1 to 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese patent 11029836 or US Patent 6,270,596 cited by applicant in IDS dated September 15, 2004.

3. Each reference teaches a specific steel alloy having a composition which meets the recited claims, and when calculated, satisfy the claimed equations. See Steel 7 in Table 1 of columns 5 and 6 in US Patent'596 and Steel M on page 5 of JP'836. Even though they are comparative examples, they are still considered prior art because they have been published and therefore known in the art. Also even though prior art does not teach the claimed equations, such would not be a patentable difference because it has been held that there is no invention involved in the discovery of a general formula if it covers a composition described in the prior art.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 5 to 12 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese patent 11029836 or US Patent 6,270,596 cited by applicant in IDS dated September 15, 2004.

6. As stated in paragraph 3, US Patent '596 steel 7 and JP'836 steel M meet the claimed composition and equation. Moreover, JP'836 in the machined English translation on page 3, paragraph 10 teaches cold working (cold forging) followed by induction hardening which meets the method claim 9 to 12 of working at 850C or lower. Also US Patent '596 in claim 1 of column 8 discloses rolling or forging at Ac3 to 1050 and therefore would overlap with applicant's range of 850C or lower. Even though the 10% or more reduction recited by the method claims is not taught by prior art, such would be a matter of choice and routine optimization well within the skill of the artisan, and also % reduction would be expected since a drive shaft, similar to applicant's invention, is being produced.

7. Even though prior art does not teach a ferrite-pearlite-bainite microstructure or other properties as recited by claims 5 to 8, such would be expected since composition is met, and process steps are essentially the same, and in absence of proof to the contrary. Also similar to the present invention, US patent '596 steel 7 in Table 2 of column has a surface hardness of 764 which meets the surface hardness of 650HV or higher recited in claim 5.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

8. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

9. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.


10. Claim 5 recites "tissue" which is indefinite because it is not a metallurgical term known in the art. It is recommended to use the language such as --microstructure--- to refer to the ferrite+pearlite+bainite.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Deborah Yee whose telephone number is 571-272-1253. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 6:00 to 2:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on 571-272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 1742

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Deborah Yee
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

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